Exiled in Babylon

ILLUSTRATED SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Scripture—Jeremiah Lamentations 5.

By Alfred J. Buescher

When Zedekiah rebelled, Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah, destroying Jerusalem and taking the able-bodied into captivity.—Jeremiah 52:1-15.

Only the poor, ill, aged and children remained in Judah. When the Assyrians freed Jeremiah he chose to return to Jerusalem.—Jeremiah 52:16-34.

Jeremiah lamented the condition of his people. They had been treated brutally and were left sick, starving, and in want.—Lamentations 5:1-14.

Recognizing that salvation lay with eternal God, Jeremiah sought His mercy.—Lamentations 5:15-22. GOLDEN TEXT: Psalms 130:7.

Produced by Sun Printing Service

EXILED IN BABYLON

Those who know God have abiding hope

By R. H. RAMSEY

LAMENTATIONS is placed among the major prophetical works of the Bible because of a tradition — now regarded as doubtful — that it was written by Jeremiah.

Other scholars, while not accepting Jeremiah as the author of this book, agree that it was written in his time, between the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and the return from the Exile in 538 B.C.

The book consists of five elegies, taking the capture and destruction of Jerusalem as their theme.

Grief

It progresses from expression of grief, to recollection of God's love as ground for hope, exhortation to repentance and confession, and, finally, fervent prayer for deliverance from tribulation.

Jeremiah 52 is the prophet's account of the destruction of the Kingdom of Judah.

Zedekiah had been placed upon the throne of Judah by the Babylonians, against whom he eventually rebelled.

There had been previous rebellions, but this was to be the last one. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Assyria, moved against Judah and besieged the city of Jerusalem.

Eighteen months later, a breach was made in the walls and Jerusalem fell.

The city was plundered, sacked and burned; famine and disease had taken their toll of the Hebrews.

The Babylonians finished the job by taking all able bodies persons into captivity. Everything of value was carried off. The nobles and princes were slain.

Prison

King Zedekiah, who had escaped from the city with his family, was captured.

His family was slain and he was blinded before being taken away to prison in chains.

Only the sick, the aged and the small children were left, and Jeremiah elected to remain in Jerusalem with the sorrowful remnant of his people.

His description of their plight shows them to be as miserable as those who were carried away captive, for their utter misery is seen in every word of the prophet's lament.

Lamentations 5 begins with a prayer that God look down on His people and remember their condition.

GOLDEN TEXT

"Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption."
—Psalm 130:7.....

The Golden Text

"Lamentation of Jeremiah"

"Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy and with him is plenteous redemption."—Psalms 130:7.

Pagans

They had lost everything — even their homes — to the invading pagans.

In losing the protection of their city and government the people have become as "widows," helpless and defenseless.

They were living in desperate want, with famine and pestilence as everyday companions.

The invading Assyrians had meted out shameful, brutal treatment to the helpless Hebrews, exactly as Isaiah had prophesied more than a hundred years earlier.

Invasion and conquest bring deplorable conditions among the people of any age, yet Jeremiah's details serve to remind us how little progress man has made in the last 2,500 years.

Jeremiah introduces many of his previous statements into these lamentations.

None of these calamities, he acknowledges, are due to any lack of power on God's part, nor are they because the people have been deceived.

Payment

They have happened because the people have sinned against the Lord. While most of those who had sinned died with the fall of Jerusalem, the Lord is exacting payment for their prior sins from their children and those remaining in order to chasten them.

Having described the awful condition of his people, Jeremiah offers a petition to God.

Recognizing that the people's salvation was with God, he sought God's mercy and grace. The glory of Zion had come to an end but Jeremiah knew God remained the same and that His rule was eternal.

Punished

Man sinned and was punished, but God remained constant.

God had permitted His chosen people to go their merry way without forcing them to conform to His will.

He had given them freedom of choice and they had chosen unwisely.

Eventually, however, God had intervened, levying His wrath and justice upon them in the form of the invading Assyrians.

Rejected

Subjection followed and it was only when the children had learned what their fathers had failed to learn that God renewed their good days and brought the exile to an end.

Had the Lord utterly rejected His people, Israel, He would have had to make His name despises in the eyes of nations.

This He did not do. Aware of it, Jeremiah ended his lament —or prayer — on the note of renewal.

Legends of the flowers

Korean legend tells of a hermit who removed an arrow from a tiger's paw and won a devoted friend.

When the time came for the tiger to die, he begged the hermit to keep him close.

The kind old man agreed, and by magic the animal's body turned into a lily . . . the tiger lily.

* * *

The fairies were once so captivated by the beautiful tulips in an old woman's garden that they used the blooms as cradles for some of their elfin tots. One evening, however, the old woman discovered the pixes asleep in the flowers.

The very next day she planted more tulips so that each fairy baby would have a cradle.

As a reward for her kindness, the fairies blessed her with luck and happiness.

* * *

Legend has it that the first gladiola bloomed in the spot where two warring brothers restored peace between them by driving their swords into the earth as a symbol of trust and friendship. Another story tells of a young prince who feared the responsibilities of kingship.

He observed the peaceful lily-like flower of the gladioi and the sword-like leaves and resolved to be like this flower . . . quiet, yet majestic, flexible yet strong.

* * *

The Chinese tell us of a courtier who once offended the Emperor of China and was forced to flee to the valley of the chrysanthemums.

There, drinking dew from the flower petals, he became immortal.

Many still believe that dew from these flowers will prolong life.

Children love the tale of the Queen of Fairies who sent her gnomes into the forest to gather nectar in small, white porcelain cups.

The playful gnomes, however, hung their cups on blades of grass and turned into games.

At the end of the day they found they could not remove the cups from the blades of grass!

The Queen had turned them into lilies-of-the-valley.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

An Afro Feature Story

Seventeen years ago when the June, 1951 graduating class of Morgan State College received its degrees there was no yearbook to keep for memory's sake.

Something had gone wrong with the publishing.

As each subsequent graduating class collected their Prometheans, as the yearbooks are called, the class of '51 grew more determined.

George G. Brown, class president and now manager of the Mondawmin branch of the C. and P. Telephone Co. in Baltimore held on to all of the material.

Mrs. Harriette Coleman Howard

Promethean

In 1961 the class again talked about the lack of a Promethean.

However, it was not until they began planning for their 15th reunion did a yearbook committee get together.

Mrs. Harriette C. Howard now a placement counselor in the Baltimore Public Schools was named chairman. She worked with Mr. Brown and Bertram Merritt, science department head at Harlem Park Junior High School.

George G. Brown, Class President, 1951

17-YEARS AFTER GRADUATION

PHYSICIANS

Joshua Mitchell, Uthman Roy Jr., Richard F. Tyson, Donald W. Stewart.

MINISTER

Clifton Gatewood — NYC

LAWYER

Lawrence Carter

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

John Ward, vice principal, Polytechnic Institute, John Waters, special assistant, Woodbourne Junior High, Bertram Merritt, science department head, Harlem Park Junior High.

TEACHERS

(Elementary, Secondary and College)

Annie N. S. Armstrong, Delores Parker, Charles Bowers, Paul Johnson, Jacqueline Foster, Bethany, Conn., Virginia Brooks, A. Porter, Hattie W. Richardson, Charles R. Robinson, Rosa Williams, Elaine Young Jones, Clarence G. Contee.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Ellen Dolphe, Howard, head, educational and occupational information, in Guidance and Placement, Baltimore Department of Education, Edith Gordon, Vacountess E. Fayne, Carolyn O. Smith, Harriette C. Howard.

CASE WORKERS

Gloria Tucker Brown, Bel Air, Md., Robert Johns,

CHEMISTS

Melvin C. Bassett, Department of Army, Robert Hawkins, City Hospitals.

POLICEMEN

George P. Mooer, White Plains, P.Y., Francis Walker, Philadelphia.

OTHERS

Cancer Research—Flora Hull Grantham, National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, Md., Department of Recreation — John Faulkner, supervisor, field supervisor and group work instructor, D.C. — Samuel LaBeach, C. and P. Telephone — George G. Brown, manager, Mondawmin Branch Post Office—Lindsey Hill.

(Unless otherwise indicated, all entries are residing and working in Baltimore)

$400

The group discovered that the $538 originally set aside from class dues in 1951 wasn't enough for a classbook now.

A campaign was begun to get members of the class to underwrite the additional $400 or so needed.

In September 1967 the publishers delivered the 1951 Promethean. By this June most of the members had received their books.

The '51 edition is no like the modern hard back version published by the Class of 1968.

It is a 47-page softback on white glossy paper. But the pictures are clear and the June class photographs supplied by Paul Henderson, retired photographer, shows 193 faces.

51 Grads

The August 1951 class has 51 graduates. (Morgan no longer has graduations in both June and August. All graduate in June.

The book is dedicated to Clearman Sutton. Said the dedication: "Sutton, despite the fact that he is blind, is the epitome of the true Morgan spirit.

Also

"His handicap has never served as an excuse to be excluded from any activity that may need his assistance."

There are also pictures of President Martin Jenkins; the late Dean George C. Grant; the late James H. Carter, president's assistant; Dr. Edward Wilson, now retired registrar, and Miss Sallie Ponzo, alumni secretary.

Dr. John W King, professor of biology, was the class adviser.

Bertram L. Merritt helped to assemble the much desired 1951 Promethean

Just Plain People

One of the big fears expressed by officials of the various cities through which the many busses carrying hundreds of people to the site of the Poor People's March in Washington, D.C. was that the police departments would be unable to control an outbreak under the peculiar conditions created by the migration.

In Baltimore the Police Department made no efforts to control an outbreak but rather proceeded to prevent one.

Northwestern District Captain Dennis P. Mello like many other officers openly mingled with and offered assistance to the many hundreds who passed through Baltimore City. The caravan passed through without incidence.

Captain Dennis P. Mello comforts little tot